

# **TOWN OF WILTON BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**Location: Wilton Town Hall: Selectmen's Office  
7:00 PM**

## **FINAL MEETING MINUTES October 8, 2015**

*Members Present: Cary Hughes, Chair; Harry Dailey; Joyce Fisk; Rick Swanson, Selectmen Rep., and Dawn Tuomala, Secretary*

- 1. Chairman Hughes called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.**
- 2. Review and Approval of July 23, 2015 Minutes**

**Motion was made by Mr. Dailey to approve the minutes as written: Seconded by Rick Swanson; 3 in favor; 1 abstentions (Ms. Fisk); motion passes.**

- 3. NH State Budget Impacts to the Town – Presentation**

Kermit Williams and Carol Roberts presented an estimate on the State reduction of revenues that will be affecting the Town. Mr. Williams stated that there will be a reduction in revenues of approximately \$161,000 that will affect both the Town and the School budgets.

Even though the State raised the gas tax none of that money is scheduled to be returned to the Towns which would have been an additional \$16,000 for Wilton. In addition to the State not refunding money the County tax is estimated to increase 8% due to higher nursing home budgets. Many of the costs are split up; the State is paying for the children and the counties are paying for the elderly. Mr. Williams stated that it will be harder this year to keep the tax rate level.

Different bills will impact the Town in different ways. The Red Listed bridges haven't been increased since 1994. Bottom line even if all of the budgets were to remain flat we will be looking at \$161,000 less in revenues provided by the State. The State has been shifting the entire burden to the Towns. Since 2011 the State has eliminated its entire share of contributions on to the Towns for the police and teachers retirement funds. Mr. Williams stated that NH has one of the most underfunded pensions in the US. Many States are looking to use our system as an example.

- 4. Salary and Wages Committee Presentation**

Mr. Dailey passed out the proposed pay scale report. The report has been updated with many of the recommendations that the Selectmen made on Monday night. They will be returning next Monday night and will hopefully get the final approval.

Mr. Dailey stepped the Committee through the report starting with a pay grade scale that incorporates every employee of the Town. Every pay grade has a minimum, mid-point and a maximum range. All ranges have a \$7.50 difference between the minimum and the

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maximum. Pay scales of the surrounding Towns were analyzed; some employees pay will be increased to be more competitive with surrounding Towns. It was a little difficult some times to match directly since many of the employees do several jobs and not just one, this occurs especially within the Highway Department. The Department Heads have also had to come up with job descriptions for every position.

The committee also worked on creating Performance Reviews sheets; these reviews will be conducted each year for every employee. The first 15 questions will be the same for each position and the remaining 3 to 10 questions will be job specific. Numbers will be assigned to each and their pay increase will be dependent upon the total number that they receive.

The Selectmen will review the Department Heads. The intent is to have all town employees that receive tax payer dollars be reviewed even the Library, Sewer and Water employees. If an employee falls "Below Standard" they will be given a 90 day action plan before they will receive any raise. If they don't come up to standard than other appropriate actions will be taken. If an employee is at the maximum pay scale; and in the next few years there will be 2 employees; then they will get a COLA increase instead.

There is a huge Thank You to Mr. Dailey for spear heading this effort along with all of the Department Heads who contributed and the Police for bringing it all together. Chairman Hughes welcomed the new system.

The Selectmen have asked the committee to look at a couple of different options which will be presented at the meeting next Monday night. The intent has been to have this document in place for the budget season this year. It's a great tool for the Department Heads and also for the employees. It will make everyone more accountable to do each job and define what the expected standards are. The only remaining issue after the Selectmen have approved it is to have each Department Head take the class in evaluations.

### **5. Feasibility of Hiring a Town Administrator – Presentation**

Mr. Swanson stated the upon the recommendations from many different citizens in Town the Selectmen have been asked to look into the notion of a Town Administrator. They have chosen to go with the option of an Administrator verses a Town Manager due to what they can and can't do legally. Members of the Committee include Cary Hughes, Kermit Williams (Chair), Jackie Kahle (Citizen at Large), Harry Dailey, Carol Roberts and Tom Schultz. Mr. Swanson is not on the committee.

Mr. Swanson stated that the Town of Wilton has always been very good at doing more with less but at some point they would be able to work more professionally with a Town Administrator. The Committee will be looking at the Pros and Cons of each. Some of the responsibilities will include bidding, contracting, purchasing, finding and writing grants, look at the economic development and managing the financial budget. Presently they lean heavily on the staff that they have but they will be able to function better if there were someone that could help.

The Committees work should be completed in time to bring this up as a warrant article at Town Meeting if they feel the position is warranted. Since this will be a change to the way

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that the Town presently operates it should go before the Town's people to have their input on it. Mr. Swanson quoted Mr. Condra who stated that the Select Board were united in having a committee to look at the question and that it was the right way to make the decision. They were not united in having the position itself.

### **6. Review of Expenditures through September 30, 2015**

Mr. Swanson stated that the Selectmen had Mr. Greene go through every budget a month ago and that he was generally pleased and that there weren't too many surprises.

Mr. Dailey asked if there were a way to clearly indicated what would be encumbered by the end of the year so that the amounts and percentages would be closer to the final. There are many items that are purchased at the end of the year and many invoices that are also due at that time. It will be a little difficult and time consuming to pull of that information out of every Department or Committee or Board.

There was discussion about the Town Hall and the energy audit, Mr. Swanson stated that there could possibly be \$24,000 in rebates from Eversource. They have or will have to spend an additional \$10,000 to replace the old knob and tube wiring before any insulation work can be done. The work needs to be done by the end of the year in order to qualify for the rebates. The Joint Loss Committee has also asked for 4,900 in Safety upgrades to meet the codes.

Chief Hautanen stated that the State decided to change the inspection dates for emergency and safety vehicles from March to September this year without informing anyone. Everyone will have to do 2 inspections this year instead of the usual one. This has increased the Town costs for everyone. The Fire shop that is building the new fire truck is also an inspection station so they are having to deal with the additional inspections instead of building the new fire truck.

Chief Zirpolo stated that the stretcher came in and that he also received a \$17,000 grant for it so it only cost the 3 participating towns \$1,800. This was a 90% grant.

### **7. Review of Revenues through September 30, 2015**

Revenues were not available for the meeting.

### **8. Review of Capital Items Purchased to date**

More work will need to be done on this as the budgets numbers weren't included on the spreadsheet.

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**9. Other Business**

**a. Department Assignments**

Most Department assignments will remain the same. Those changing are:

Mr. Hughes will take Recycling, Cemetery, Highway, Parks and Recreation and Resurfacing.

Mr. Swanson will take the Water Works, Sewer Department and the Planning Board. The Town Clerk's office will also have a separate budget this year that Mr. Swanson will help guide them along with the Town Hall Budget.

**b. Set Meeting Dates**

Future Meeting dates were set and will be posted along with the Department assignments.

**c. Department Letter**

The letter going to the Department Heads will include requiring them to use the new pay scale that has been worked out. The letter will not go out until the Selectmen have approved the pay scale.

**10. Adjournment**

The next meeting will be on December 3, 2015 at 7:00 PM in the Wilton Town Hall. Chairman Hughes thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

***A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Dailey and seconded by Ms. Fisk; all in favor. The Budget Committee was adjourned at 8:35 PM.***

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Tuomala, Secretary